



**Contra
Costa
County**

To: Contra Costa County Fire Protection District Board of Directors
 From: Jeff Carman, Chief, Contra Costa County Fire Protection District
 Date: September 18, 2018

Subject: Status of Fire District Inspection Program

RECOMMENDATION(S):

ACCEPT a report from the Fire Chief on the status of the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District fire inspection program.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Report only. No fiscal impact.

BACKGROUND:

Earlier this year, a newspaper article referenced an investigation made into the status of mandated inspections for several fire departments/districts. In the article, the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District (District) was identified as not being current in the completion of certain mandated inspections for both E (educational) and R (residential) occupancies. Additionally, the District was identified as having a records management system that was not up-to-date. The District immediately began working on these two identified issues.

The District's Fire Prevention Bureau is responsible for numerous mandated and non-mandated inspections, not all of which were referenced in the newspaper article. For

☒ APPROVE

☐ OTHER

☒ RECOMMENDATION OF CNTY
ADMINISTRATOR

☐ RECOMMENDATION OF BOARD
COMMITTEE

Action of Board On: **09/18/2018** ☒ APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED ☐ OTHER

Clerks Notes:

VOTE OF SUPERVISORS

AYE: Candace Andersen, Director
 Diane Burgis, Director
 Karen Mitchoff, Director

ABSENT: John Gioia, Director
 Federal D. Glover,
 Director

I hereby certify that this is a true and correct copy of an action taken and entered on the minutes of the Board of Supervisors on the date shown.

ATTESTED: September 18, 2018

David Twa, County Administrator and Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

Contact: Jeff Carman, Fire Chief
 925-941-3300

By: June McHuen, Deputy

cc:

example, the mandated inspections we perform in our jails, high rise buildings, and other institutions were up-to-date but not referenced. Non-mandated inspections are performed in

BACKGROUND: (CONT'D)

places such as residential care facilities because there is a high potential for loss of life should a fire occur in this type of facility. There are also inspections that must be completed prior to a new business opening its doors. Many of these inspections fluctuate in number based on the economy, and it is difficult for the District to hire inspectors as quickly as needed in order to accommodate these fluctuations.

It is important to note that the genesis for the article was to prevent another Ghost Ship fire from occurring. The type of occupancy in which the Ghost Ship fire occurred was not subject to a state mandated inspection. Consequently, while the issues in the inspection program are important to identify, being up-to-date on mandated inspections would most likely not have prevented that fire.

Several factors are relevant to the issues identified in the newspaper article. First, since the recession, the Fire Prevention Bureau has had difficulty recruiting Fire Inspectors. However, this staffing issue was already in the process of being addressed. In fact, on the Monday following the day the article was published, there were four new Fire Inspectors hired at the District. Furthermore, due to the issues identified, and in an effort to return to compliance as quickly as possible, the District had reassigned two Fire Inspectors from its Engineering Division to its Code Enforcement Division and also hired a temporary Fire Inspector.

Second, it was noted that the District had a contractual agreement from prior years to perform fire prevention work for the East Contra Costa Fire Protection District. That contract has since been canceled, and our Fire Inspectors are now able to focus on performing District (ConFire) inspections.

Third, several temporary clerical workers were hired to assure that our database was up-to-date, eliminate old/obsolete inspections, eliminate duplicate inspections, and make sure that all new occupancies were in the system.

As a result of the measures taken, we are now up-to-date on all E occupancy inspections and have completed 80% of our backlog of R inspections. We are on target to be completely current by January 1, 2019.

The District is also in the process of performing a staffing study to determine if the number of positions we have in the Fire Prevention Bureau is adequate to maintain our annual inspection requirements or if we need additional positions. We are also looking at new fire prevention software that would improve our efficiency by allowing for the input of fire inspection data from the field via mobile devices. The District will report back to the Board if additional Fire Inspector positions are needed and/or it becomes necessary to modify our projected completion date.